

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 03934 201727Z
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 03934

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, BE
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON MAY NAC MEETING

REF: BRUSSELS 3855

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF OF NATO AFFAIRS, ERIK BAL, WAS CALLED BACK FROM SICK LEAVE DUE MINOR SURGERY TODAY TO FORMULATE AND COORDINATE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO OUR APRIL 19 PRESENTATION (REFTEL).

2. BAL PROVIDED US WITH FOLLOWING BELGIAN POSITION ON MAY NAC CONSULTATIONS:

(A) BELGIAN GOVERNMENT APPRECIATES OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT WITH USG.

(B) BELGIAN GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT CONSULTATIONS WITHIN NATO FRAMEOWK SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN PARALLEL WITH ANY BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON. IF ANY PRIORITY IS TO BE ACCORDED TO EITHER BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, IT SHOULD BE ACCORDED TO MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITHIN NATO. IN TAKING THIS POSITION, THE BELGIANS ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THERE MAY BE GREATER INCONVENIENCE IN MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, BUT CONSIDER THAT SUCH CONSULTATIONS ARE AN "ARTICLE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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FAITH" FOR MEMBERS OF NATO. THE BELGIANS DO NOT WANT TO REAK WITH THE TRADITION OF HAVING MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS IN NATO.

3. WE WERE INFORMED THAT BOTH THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND OF THE BELGIAN DELEGATION TO NATO INDEPENDENTLY ARRIVED AT THIS POSITION, WHICH WAS THEN COORDINATED PRIOR TO BEING PASSED

TO US.

4. COMMENT: BELGIAN POSITION IS CONSISTENT WITH NUMEROUS INDICATIONS
WE HAVE RECEIVED (AND REPORTED) IN THE PAST. THEY PLACE GREAT
IMPORTANCE ON THE FORM OF CONSULTATIONS AND PLACE TOP PRIORITY ON
MULTILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITHIN THE TWO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH THEY BELONG, NATO AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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FORM AND LOCALE FOR CONSULTATIONS ARE CONSCIOUS AND BASIC ELEMENTS
OF BELGIAN FOREIGN POLICY.RENNER

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Message Attributes

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